<u>REMARKS</u>

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated November 26, 2003 (Paper No. 6). Claims 1 to 51 are in the application, of which Claims 1, 10, 18, 27, 35 and 44, the independent claims, have been amended. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, Claims 1 to 51 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,181,440 (Masuda) in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,992,783 (Zdunek). In addition, Claims 35 to 51 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Masuda in view of Zdunek and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,764,807 (Pearlman). Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

The present invention generally concerns the retrieval of document data, in which a request for retrieval of document data is received from a user, with the request including a password. The stored document data is retrieved and the document data is output. According to one feature of the invention, a new password is issued in response to receiving from the user the request for retrieval of the document data.

By virtue of the foregoing, in which a new password is issued in response to receiving from the user the request for retrieval of the document data, the confidentiality of document data is maintained even in the case where users are no longer authorized to access the document data.

Referring specifically to the claims, independent Claim 1 as amended is directed to an apparatus for conducting a retrieval of document data including storing means for storing the document data, a receiver, for receiving from a user a request for retrieval of the document data, with the request including a password, and a transmitter, for

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transmitting the password, received by the receiver, to a managing unit on a network. The apparatus also includes deciding means for, when the managing unit confirms the password transmitted by the transmitter, receiving a confirmation result from the managing unit to decide, on the basis of the confirmation result, whether or not the user is an authorized user. In addition, the apparatus includes retrieving means for retrieving the document data stored in the storing means according to a decision result obtained by the deciding means, and outputting means for outputting document data retrieved by the retrieving means. The apparatus also includes issuing means for issuing a new password in response to receiving from the user the request for retrieval of the document data by the receiver, and registering means for transmitting the new password, issued by the issuing means, to the managing unit to register the new password as a valid password.

In a similar manner, independent Claims 18 and 35 as amended respectively define the invention in terms of a method and a record medium storing a computer program.

Independent Claim 10 as amended is directed to an apparatus for conducting a retrieval of document data including storing means for storing the document data, a receiver, for receiving a request for a retrieval of the document data, including a password, from a user, and confirming means for confirming authorization of the user through the use of the password which the receiver receives. The apparatus also includes retrieving means for retrieving the document data stored in the storing means on the basis of a confirmation result by the confirming means, and outputting means for outputting document data retrieved by the retrieving means. In addition, the apparatus includes issuing means for issuing a new password in response to a receiving operation of the receiving means, and

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notifying means for notifying the user of the new password issued by the issuing means in a mode corresponding to a mode taken for when the receiver receives the retrieval request.

In a similar manner, independent Claims 27 and 44 as amended respectively define the invention in terms of a method and a record medium storing a computer program.

The applied art is not seen to disclose or to suggest the features of the present invention. More particularly, the applied art is not seen to provide for issuing a new password in response to receiving from the user the request for retrieval of the document data.

Masuda discloses a facsimile apparatus, which includes a printer, a memory, a reception unit, and a setting unit. See Masuda, Abstract; column 2, line 63 to column 3, line 4; and Figure 1. As acknowledged in the Office Action, however, Masuda does not disclose issuing a new password in response to receiving from the user the request for retrieval of the document data.

Zdunek was cited for its alleged disclosure of issuing a new password in response to receiving a document retrieval request from a user. As understood by Applicant, Zdunek discloses a communication system in which subscribers use a password for access to communication resources. Subscribers are commanded to modify and re-transmit their password and ID code either periodically or upon requesting access to the communication system. The modified password is retained as the current password by both the subscriber and the communication system. See Abstract; column 8, line 63 to column 9, line 5; and Fig. 4. However, Zdunek does not teach that the system issues a new password in response to a document retrieval request by the user (or subscriber). Rather,

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Zdunek teaches that subscribers modify their password on a periodic basis or upon requesting access to the system.

The Office Action took the position that lines 3 to 12 of Zdunek's column 9 describes issuance of a new password in response to receipt from a user of a request for retrieval of document data. Applicant has reviewed this portion of Zdunek, and finds that it contains no such description, but rather reinforces the above explanation that Zdunek does not describe issuance of a password in response to receipt of a user request for document retrieval:

"Optionally the subscriber unit may have automatically generated a new

password after the expiration of a timer or the occurrence of some event".

Thus Zdunek generates a new password at the expiration of a timer or occurrence of some unarticulated event, and not in response to receipt of a user request for document retrieval.

As such, even if Masuda and Zdunek are combined in the manner proposed in the Office Action (assuming for argument's sake that such combination would be permissible), the result would not teach at least the feature of issuing a new password in response to receiving a request for retrieval of the document data from the user, nor would it suggest the attendant benefits provided by issuing a new password in this manner.

In addition, Pearlman has been reviewed and is not seen to compensate for the deficiencies of Masuda and Zdunek.

Accordingly, based on the foregoing remarks, independent Claims 1, 10, 18, 27, 35 and 44 are believed to be allowable over the applied references. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the § 103(a) rejections are respectfully requested.

The other claims in the application are each dependent from the independent claims and are believed to be allowable over the applied references for at least the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

No other matters being raised, it is believed that the entire application is fully in condition for allowance, and such action is courteously solicited.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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